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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/262,126	03/03/1999	BRIAN S. MILLER	GC396-2	8961
5100 7590 06/26/2007 GENENCOR INTERNATIONAL, INC. ATTENTION: LEGAL DEPARTMENT 925 PAGE MILL ROAD PALO ALTO, CA 94304			EXAMINER RAO, MANJUNATH N	
			ART UNIT 1652	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/262,126	Applicant(s) MILLER ET AL.	
	Examiner Manjunath N. Rao, Ph.D.	Art Unit 1652	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-10, 12, 14, 15, 27-40 and 52-66 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

CONTINUED EXAMINATION UNDER 37 CFR 1.114 AFTER FINAL REJECTION

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 4-4-07 has been entered.

Claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 are currently pending in this application.

Applicants' arguments filed on 4-4-07, have been fully considered and are deemed to be persuasive to overcome the rejections previously applied.

Claim Objections

Claim 5 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 5 recites the bacterial species name "deramificans" with incorrect spelling as "deramification". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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Claims 5-10, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Deweer et al. (US 6,074, 854 filed 12-23-97, issued 6-13-2000) and McPherson et al. (Biochemical Soc. Trans., 1988, vol. 16(5): 723-724) or Albertson (Biochim. Biophys. Acta, Vol. 1354:35-39, 1997).

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). This rejection might also be overcome by showing that the reference is disqualified under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) as prior art in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). See MPEP § 706.02(l)(1) and § 706.02(l)(2).

Claims 5-10, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 in this instant application are drawn to a modified pullulanase from *B.deramificans* T89.117D with an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein the modification is a deletion of about 98, 100, 102, 200 amino acids from the amino terminus, wherein the modified pullulanase is produced by culturing a host cell comprising a nucleic acid which is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1 encoding a truncated pullulanase

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wherein the host cell is *B.licheniformis* in which certain proteases are inactivated or eliminated.

The claims are also drawn to compositions comprising the above-modified pullulanase and compositions further comprising additional enzymes such as glucoamylase isolated from *Aspergillus* strains and wherein the modified pullulanase is 60 or 80% of the composition and wherein the composition is in the solid or liquid form.

Deweert et al. teach a pullulanase obtained from a Gram-positive bacteria such as *B.deramificans* T89.117D produced by a method of culturing a host cell such as *B.licheniformis* in which certain protease genes have been inactivated. The reference also teaches the method of making the recombinant enzyme by obtaining the host cell transformed with a polynucleotide having more than 90% identity to SEQ ID NO: 1 (see sequence alignment sent in the previous Office action). The reference teaches the compositions either in the solid form or liquid form comprising pullulanase wherein it is of the order of 60% of the total enzyme concentration. The reference also teaches compositions comprising additional enzymes such as glucoamylase isolated from *Aspergillus* strains (see claims in the reference). However, the reference does not teach modification of pullulanase by way of deletion of about 100, 200 or 300 N-terminal amino acids.

McPherson et al. teach that pullulanases in general are significantly large enzymes when compared to other polysaccharide hydrolases and that this large size reduces the efficiency with which it can function by restricting access to internal alpha 1,6 bonds within highly branched substrates. The reference teaches that proteolytic digestion and computer-based sequence analyses are being used in the art to define a functional "core" pullulanase. The reference provides sources for such computer based homology searches. As an example the reference

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provides a schematic illustration of the relative position of the 5 conserved "amylase" regions within a selection of hydrolases in comparison to the large *K.pneumoniae* pullulanase. The reference teaches that the long N-terminal region lacks any polysaccharide binding or catalyzing sites. McPherson et al. teach the modification of deleting nearly 170 amino acid residues from the amino terminal end of that enzyme, which leads to approximately 30% higher activity than that of the full length enzyme.

Albertson et al. also teach the modification of a pullulanase (from *C.saccharolyticus*), wherein nearly 381 nucleotides from the 5' region of the cDNA encoding a pullulanase was deleted resulting in a N-terminal truncated pullulanase. The reference also teaches that the deleted amino acid sequence is not essential for either activity or thermostability.

While both McPherson et al. and Albertson et al. do not teach a pullulanase isolated from a *Bacillus*, it appears that experiments involving truncation of N-terminal amino acids in pullulanase enzymes isolated from different sources was well known and practiced in the art. These experiments appear to have been performed to increase the efficiency of the enzyme, to determine the nature and the location of secretion signal, activity, catalytic site, transport across membrane and secretion into liquid medium.

Combining the teachings of all the above references, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to compare the large pullulanase provided by Deweer et al. with other *Bacillus* pullulanase just as taught by McPherson et al., followed by a method to make a modified pullulanase in which any number of amino acids from the N-terminal region have been deleted. This is because Deweer et al. teach a pullulanase isolated from a bacillus, *B.deramificans*, which is a very large size enzyme with 928 amino acids. McPherson et

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al. teach a method of increasing the efficiency of large size pullulanase by determining and deleting non-essential amino acids in the N-terminal region. Albertson et al. and McPherson et al. demonstrate such a deletion and successfully delete up to 170 amino acids from *K.pneumoniae* pullulanase and 381 nucleotides from the 5' region of the nucleotide sequence encoding *C.saccharolyticus* pullulanase, wherein they show that such deletion does not affect the activity of the enzyme negatively but on the other hand increases the efficiency of the enzyme by nearly 30%. It would also be obvious for one skilled in the art to eliminate or inactivate protease genes in the expression hosts, such as Carlsberg protease or endo Glu C protease as Deweer et al. teach inactivation of these proteases such that any heterologous protein expressed in these host cells is not digested by the endogenous proteases. Based on the above teachings, one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to delete N-terminal amino acids just as McPherson et al. by comparing and determining N-terminal regions of large pullulanase that do not have any conserved sequences for either activity or binding to polysaccharide and cleavage of such non-essential sequences leading to higher efficiency of the enzyme. One of ordinary skill in the art would have a reasonable expectation of success since Deweer et al. provide the amino acid sequence and the nucleic acid encoding the pullulanase from *B.deramificans* in a host cell such as *B. licheniformis* in which protease genes have been inactivated and also provide the compositions comprising up to 60% of pullulanase in order to perform the modification and McPherson et al. and Albertson et al. teach similar truncation that works even in pullulanases isolated from such diverse sources.

Therefore the claimed invention would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

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This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

In response to the above rejection, applicants have traversed arguing at length that the invention is not rendered obvious by the references. In addition applicants make an issue of several previous Office actions and the statement made by the examiner that the rejection is based on printed publications and a patent. Applicants also maintain that they have presented a persuasive argument that the claims were not obvious in the response filed on July 28, 2003 and therefore they need only show why the cited publications and patent do not render the claimed invention obvious in light of these three documents as there has been no notice that any other evidence is being relied upon. The above arguments are not entirely clear to the Examiner. The significance of making an issue of the examiner's statement in the previous Office actions is also not clear to the Examiner.

In response to the above rejection, applicants continue to maintain, at length, mainly on three points, i.e., that the combination (of references) fails to suggest or motivate one of skill in the art to modify the teachings to yield the claimed invention; the combination fails to disclose the elements of the claimed invention; the combination fails to provide reasonable expectation of

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success. Examiner respectfully disagrees and has already addressed applicant's such arguments in the previous Office action. He reiterates the very same arguments herein.

First, applicants maintain that there is no teaching or suggestion to look for biologically active pullulanase fragments in Deweer et al. and there is nothing in Deweer et al. that would suggest or motivate the skilled artisan to truncate the *Bacillus pullulanase* or to combine its teachings with McPherson et al. or Albertson et al.

With reference to McPherson et al. reference applicants submit that at best the reference teaches that there may be some length of the N-terminal region of pullulanase that has no defined catalytic function for the *Klebsiella* pullulanase and that there is no suggestion that the lack of defined catalytic function found in *Klebsiella* would be similarly found in an unrelated and non-homologous pullulanase. Applicants also argue (see page 19 of the remarks filed on 4-4-07) that the Examiner asserts that McPherson et al. states "The predicted amino acid sequences of pullulanases from *Klebsiella pneumoniae* strains W70 ... and FG9 ... are very similar and provide the basis for the design of experiments to examine pullulanase function" and therefore, the similarity in the protein sequences was critical to designing experiments to define a functional 'core' pullulanase and there is very little sequence similarity between the presently claimed pullulanase and the pullulanase of McPherson et al. and therefore one of skill in the art would not be motivated to combine McPherson et al. with DeWeer due to the lack of similarity between the pullulanases. Examiner respectfully disagrees. While McPherson et al. has indeed compared the two pullulanases of *Klebsiella*, that information alone would not lead those skilled in the art to away from truncating pullulanases from other sources. The more important teaching in the reference of McPherson on which this rejection is based is the fact that McPherson teaches in

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general about truncating pullulanases such that the enzyme efficiency can be increased. It is this important teaching that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to truncate large size pullulanases.

Applicants also argue (page 20 of the remarks filed on 4-4-07) that there is no mention of a deletion of about 100 amino acids from the amino terminus of a pullulanase obtainable from *B. deramificans* in either Deweer et al. or McPherson et al. and that although McPherson et al. describes a deletion of 170 amino acids that is in an unrelated gram-negative bacterial pullulanase, and not in a *Bacillus* pullulanase and therefore, the combination fails to disclose at least two of the elements of the presently claimed invention. Examiner again respectfully disagrees. Examiner also reminds applicants that this rejection is an obviousness rejection and therefore unlike a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 statutes, the reference used under the current statute need not teach an identical invention. Even though the reference does not exactly teach the removal of the amino acids from a *Bacillus* pullulanases, there is a clear teaching and suggestion that in pullulanases irrespective of the source, deletion of N-terminal amino acids increases the efficiency of the enzyme. The two references provided form the Examiner teaches that deletions can be done in pullulanases from as diverse sources as a *Klebsiella* and *C. saccharolyticus*. From the teachings of McPherson et al. there is no scientific reason to believe that deletion of N-terminal amino acids in a pullulanase obtained from a Gram positive bacterial source such as a *Bacillus* will not work. Contrary to applicant's argument, McPherson makes it very clear, the large structure of all the pullulanases and the existence of large stretches of amino acid sequences in the N-terminal that can be deleted without affecting the function of the enzyme. It is this kind of highly generalized information which could be used on any

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pullulanase, on which the examiner has based his rejection. McPherson et al. clearly state that pullulanases are significantly large enzymes when compared to other polysaccharide hydrolases and that this large size reduces the efficiency with which it can function by restricting access to internal alpha 1,6 bonds within highly branched substrates. The reference teaches that proteolytic digestion and computer-based sequence analyses are being used in the art to define a functional "core" pullulanase. The reference provides sources for such computer based homology searches. As an example the reference provides a schematic illustration of the relative position of the 5 conserved "amylase" regions within a selection of hydrolases in comparison to the large *K.pneumoniae* pullulanase. The reference limits its example to the *Klebsiella* enzyme and there is nothing in the reference, which would lead those skilled in the art to conclude that above teachings would not apply to pullulanases from other sources. Rather, as stated earlier, it is this kind of information that would be used by those skilled in the art in order to truncate pullulanases from other sources.

Applicants maintain a similar tangential argument with respect to the reference of Albertson et al. While examiner has used the above reference only to show that deletion of sequences in pullulanases appears to be well known in the art and practiced on pullulanases from varied sources, applicants argue that there is no suggestion or motivation to delete sequences.

Applicants also maintain that the combination fails to provide a reasonable expectation of success. Examiner respectfully disagrees. As stated earlier examiner has used the Albertson's reference to show that deletion of pullulanase is practiced to trim pullulanases from varied sources. The references show that there is a reasonable expectation of success in truncating any

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pullulanase from any source. Examiner has established from the above two references that one of skill in the art would doubt very little regarding the expectation of success in truncating the pullulanase from a *Bacillus* source. Therefore, for all the above reasons, Examiner continues to maintain the above rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being *prima facie* obvious.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Deweer et al. (US 6,074, 854 filed 12-23-97, issued 6-13-2000). This rejection is based upon the public availability of a patent publication. Claim 12 of the instant application is drawn to a modified pullulanase isolated from *B. deramificans*, wherein the modification is an addition of at least has at least one amino acid added to the amino terminus of a mature pullulanase amino acid sequence, wherein the added amino acid is alanine.

Deweer et al. teach the modification of an identical mature pullulanase, wherein the amino acid sequence differs by at least one amino acid i.e., addition, substitution, deletion of at least one amino acid (see column 5, last paragraph to column 6, 1st paragraph). However, the reference does not specifically teach that the added amino acid needs to be alanine. With the above pullulanase in hand followed by the teaching of modifying it by at least one amino acid, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art to modify the enzyme of Deweer et al. by adding one amino acid anywhere in the sequence including the N-terminal and assay such modified enzymes of having the pullulanase activity. Since there are only twenty amino acids that can be used for modification, it would be obvious to those skilled in the art to use all or any of the twenty amino acids including alanine and select one or more of the modified enzyme that continues to have the activity. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to do so in

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order to make a pullulanase that is simply different from that of an already patented enzyme in the art. One of ordinary skill in the art would have a reasonable expectation of success since there are only a limited number of amino acids that can be used for modification of an enzyme and Deweer et al. provide the mature pullulanase enzyme and also teach that a modification with at least one amino acid can be made and provide/suggest techniques that can be used for making such modified enzyme. Therefore, the above invention would have been *prima facie* obvious to those skilled in the art.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

In response to the above rejection applicants argue that there is no teaching or suggestion in any of the cited references to specifically add an alanine to the N-terminus. Examiner respectfully disagrees with such an argument. First of all Examiner has used only the reference of Deweer et al. in this rejection. Furthermore, contrary to applicant's arguments, the reference clearly teaches the modification of an identical mature pullulanase by at least one amino acid; i.e., addition, substitution, deletion of at least one amino acid, though not specifically at the N-terminal. Examiner agrees that there is no teaching of specifically adding alanine. However, it

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would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add any one of the just twenty amino acids, alanine being one of them. Therefore the above rejection is maintained.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees.

A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d.1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Omum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.32 l(c) or 1.321 (d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 3 and 4 of U.S. Patent No. 6,074,854 in view of McPherson et al. (Biochemical Soc. Trans., 1988, vol. 16(5) :723-724) or Albertson (Biochim. Biophys. Acta, Vol. 1354:35-39, 1997). An obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but an examined

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application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim, because the examined claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over the reference claim. See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi* 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985). Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other. Claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 of the instant application and claims 3-4 of the reference patent are both directed to pullulanases. While claims 3 and 4 of the patent are drawn to the pullulanase with SEQ ID NO: 11/12, encoded by SEQ ID NO: 10 and isolated from a *B. deramificans* strain, claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 of the instant application are also drawn to the very same enzyme but to truncated form of the same. Among all the different truncated forms of the pullulanase claimed in the instant application a good number of said truncated fragments are identical to one another. The portion of the specification (and the claims) in the reference patent that supports the enzyme includes several embodiments that would indeed anticipate or render obvious the truncated forms claimed in claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 in view of the combination of teachings of McPherson et al. and Albertson et al. Claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 cannot be considered patentably distinct over claims 3-4 of the reference patent when there is specifically disclosed embodiment in the reference patent that supports claims 3-4 of that patent and falls within the scope of claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52-66 herein because combining the teachings of the patent with that of the teachings of either Albertson et al. or McPherson et al., it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify claims 3-4 of the reference by selecting a specifically disclosed embodiment that supports those claims i.e., a truncated form of the pullulanase. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been

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motivated to do this because that embodiment is disclosed as being a preferred embodiment when combined with the teachings in the art, i.e., the teachings of McPherson et al. and Albertson et al. Therefore the claimed invention would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

In response to the above rejection, applicants make an issue of the Examiner's statement that "while claims 3 and 4 of the patent are drawn to the pullulanase with SEQ ID NO: 11/12, encoded by SEQ ID NO:10 and isolated from a *B.deramificans* strain, claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 27-40, 52,66 of the instant application are also drawn to the very same enzyme but to truncated form of the same" (Emphasis added) and argue that that this is a clear indication that there is a difference between the instant claims and the '854 claims. In response Examiner reiterates that he is not arguing that the claims of the issued patent and claims of the instant application are one and the same. Examiner respectfully disagrees with such an argument to be persuasive to withdrawn the rejection. While there may be a difference between the claims of the patent and instant claims, the argument made in the rejection is that such difference would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. This is because as stated earlier the '854 patent clearly teaches of the mutants, variants that can be made from the enzyme of that patent which includes deletion of at least one amino acid. Next, applicants also argue that Examiner fails to point to a disclosure in the '854 patent that provides support for the assertion that "the enzyme includes several embodiments that would indeed anticipate or render obvious the truncated forms claimed in claims 5-10, 12, 14, 15, 27-40, 52-66." (see page 24, of the remarks filed on 4-4-07) and there is only the nebulous reference "The portion of the specification (and the claims)" as support. Examiner respectfully disagrees with such an argument. Applicants' arguments are highly

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misplaced and are misquoting the Examiner's argument. Examiner's argument in the rejection is that the combination of teachings of the patent and that of the above references includes the embodiments that would either anticipate or render the instant claims obvious. There is also no ambiguity regarding the support or the inclusion of the embodiments of instant claims in the patent of '854. As stated above, the '854 patent clearly embodies mutants, variants of the claimed pullulanases. The '854 patent makes it very clear that such variants include those arrived at by either adding, deleting or substituting at least one amino acid to the pullulanase sequence. Therefore contrary to applicant's argument examiner's assertion is correct and is free of any ambiguity. In view of all the above, the double patent rejection is maintained.

Conclusion

None of the claims are allowable.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Manjunath N. Rao, Ph.D. whose telephone number is 571-272-0939. The examiner can normally be reached on 7.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ponnathapura Achutamurthy can be reached on 571-272-0928. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manjunath N. Rao', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Manjunath N. Rao, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
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